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HARDING SUSPENDS ALL NON-INSTRUCTIONAL LARGE GROUP ACTIVITIES BEGINNING FRIDAY

written by Madisonscott September 17, 2020

NEW COVID-19 DIRECTIVES

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Assistant Vice President for Student Life Zach Neal announced in a campuswide email Thursday that all non-instructional large group activities will be suspended starting Friday, Sept. 18, due to an increase in positive COVID-19 cases and close contact quarantines. Neal said the suspension will continue for a minimum of two weeks.

“We truly appreciate the diligence many of you have demonstrated in wearing face coverings and keeping proper distancing of 6 feet,” Neal said in his email. “However, we are in a position where we need to respond quickly to a recent increase in positive COVID-19 cases which has resulted in far too many close contact quarantines.”

These new directives prohibit any gathering of over 10 people, on or off campus, except for specially-approved events that follow state and University guidelines and in-person classes, labs or other instructional activities.

The University has a total of 115 spaces prepared for quarantining, including 50 Heritage Inn rooms, 13 Village Apartments and 52 dorm rooms. Additionally, there are 49 spaces prepared for isolation in Kendall Hall. As of noon Thursday, there were 19 active cases, 14 of which were isolating on campus. Also as of noon, 80 undergraduate students were quarantining on campus, leaving 35 remaining spaces for on-campus quarantining.

Included in this suspension is all social club receptions and activities, causing students to postpone club activities.

"I was very sad and disappointed that it had to happen, but I know they're just doing it for the sake of the students so we'll be able just to stay on campus longer," senior Abigail McKinley, vice president of women's social club Delta Gamma Rho (DGR), said.

McKinley said she and her fellow vice president will continue to prepare for their next mixer and Club Week.

"We still have that hope that we will be able to do the club process," McKinley said.

Junior Yul Quinones began quarantining in the Heritage Inn on Wednesday after receiving a phone call from Student Life; however, he said he had taken preliminary action and self-quarantined prior to this. Quinones said he thinks the added restrictions were necessary in helping prevent the spread of the virus on campus.

"It really does stink that people who want to be a part of the club process won't be able to participate right now, but I feel like with the nature of this virus and us not really fully understanding what's going on, I feel like that was a smart move," Quinones said.

In Neal's email, he also announced that increased precautions will be implemented in the student center and the cafeteria, such as increased signage and enforced table occupancy limitations.

"Especially with the caf, that's just kind of been one of the issues, and one that will continue to be an issue because you come into close contact with people no matter what you do," Quinones said.

Neal said that students are expected to strictly adhere to distancing and mask directives and that violations will be considered misconduct that will be addressed according to the disciplinary procedures found in the University Student Handbooks.

Neal said these measures are intended to limit the spread of COVID-19, as well as reduce the number of close contacts in quarantine in hopes of continuing in-person classes through Nov. 20.

ASL CLUB; A SIGN OF THE TIMES

written by Jadarobison September 18, 2020



Senior Matthew Emlaw signs to sophomore Gayla Stilley during the ASL club's weekly silent dinner in the Hamm Student Center, Sept. 10. (Photo by Namon Pope)

In 1950, Sam Roach, a Harding student who was partially deaf, founded the American Sign Language (ASL) club. Roach began the ASL club to help hearing students learn how to better communicate with the deaf community, and this club still exists today, 70 years later.

Senior Matthew Emlaw, co-president of the club, said part of the reason he chose to join the club was because his brother, who was already a member, invited him to a meeting. He said he really enjoyed the experience of being able to practice the language and learn new signs. Emlaw also said the purpose of the club was to help students become more comfortable with the language and the deaf community while also building relationships with each other.

"The purpose of the club is to help students practice and get more experience with sign language and the deaf community, while also building relationships with each other," Emlaw said.

Sophomore Morgan Haught, the activities director of the club, said she helps organize club events throughout the year to help them become better at signing, as well as connect with some of the deaf community in Arkansas.

“We normally have at least one trip to the Arkansas School for the Deaf, [and] possibly go watch a football game or a basketball game,” Haught said. “We normally have two to three trips [to] Sylvan Hills, which is a church that has a deaf community.”

Haught said one of the purposes of the club is to encourage students to learn more about sign language so they have more people who are willing to think about and communicate with the deaf community around them.

Sophomore Elizabeth Dillard, an officer for the ASL club, said it gives you the opportunity to learn something new while also giving you people who can support you in your learning journey.

“It gives you a new skill with no pressure to be an expert in a day, as well as a family to support you in your journey,” Dillard said.

Emlaw said the club is for anyone willing to learn more about the deaf community and sign language.

“You don’t have to have any ASL background to join,” Emlaw said. “I know a lot of times people will see people signing in the Stu and be intimidated and afraid ... but it’s for everybody — any skill level — whether you’ve been signing for the past five years or you’ve never signed before and are just interested — it’s for everybody.”

The club meets every Wednesday at 4:30 p.m. in the Swaid Center for Health Sciences in room 233.

HU NAVAJO STUDIES OFFER ALTERNATIVE TO STUDYING ABROAD

written by Emmajones September 18, 2020



J.D. and Kim Yingling pose on the Escalante Route at the bottom of the Grand Canyon. (Photo courtesy of J.D. Yingling)

The Harding University Navajo Studies trip — formerly known as HU Native — offers a domestic alternative to a traditional trip abroad, with a greater emphasis on outdoor adventure.

The trip, which is headed by co-directors J.D. and Kim Yingling, is offered as a four-week intersession course and gives students the opportunity to experience different Native American cultures firsthand — specifically the Navajo and Hopi tribes — and earn seven credit hours.

Students camp, hike, kayak and go mountain biking — among doing other outdoor recreational activities — in different areas of the American Southwest.

The trip itinerary includes stops to more tourist-like attractions on Route 66, along with historical locations such as the Ouachita Battlefield and Fort Sumner. Students get to visit parts of the Navajo and Hopi reservations, and hiking locations include stops at the de Chelly, Grand, Antelope and Bryce canyons, as well as other national parks like Arches and Zion.

“Our main objective is to get students to understand a culture different from theirs where they don’t have to leave the country,” J.D. said. “The Navajo and Hopi cultures are rich with history and customs. It changes your perspective to go as a learner of these cultures.”

One of the reasons the Yinglings wanted to start this program was to give students who could not afford the time or money for an international trip a similar experience in the United States.

“We’ll do a lot of our own cooking instead of going out to eat,” Kim said. “That saves a lot of money on the trip.”

This trip offers a similar bonding experience students get on a trip abroad since they go camping and experience other adventure-oriented activities with each other, J.D. said.

Audra Pleasant, director of Harding’s international studies programs, said that her office is still solely focused on sending students abroad and has not been approached about doing domestic trips.

“It would be a really big shift for [international programs] to move from all the resources and people of those places and do domestic,” Pleasant said.

Courses offered on this trip include Native American Studies (HUM 2750), Hiking and Backpacking (KINS 1330), Earth Science (PHS 1010), Sociology (SOC 2030), Wilderness First Aid (HED 2050) and Outdoor Living Skills (RECR 3500).

Anyone interested in HU Navajo Studies can contact the Yinglings at jdyingling@harding.edu or at (279) 230-4467. Applications can be found in the Ganus Activities Complex (GAC) in room 100.

A NEW GENERATION OF HU STUDENTS FOR LIFE

written by Kallybyrd September 18, 2020



The Harding University (HU) Students for Life club has recently restarted this semester HU Students for Life is a club that encourages and advocates for conversation about the anti-abortion movement, as well as suicide and sex trafficking awareness.

Junior Sierra Endsley, junior Sarah Hickerson and senior Carys Martin met with Dr. Nick Boone, associate professor of English and faculty sponsor for the club, and got the idea to bring the club back to campus. Martin said that from there, the women decided their roles and began the club-formation process, finding ways to get involved in the community and on campus.

"We were interested in joining the club and then we realized, 'Oh wait, there's actually no club to join,'" Martin said. "Dr. Boone said, 'Decide right now who wants to be president if you want to take this on,' and so then we delegated who would be president."

The students have been passionate about these causes and thought the club would be a great way to get involved and use their voice to spread awareness for these issues. The club's Instagram page says they plan to take action against suicide, euthanasia, human trafficking and abortion. Hickerson said she has a passion for these movements and using her voice for the voiceless.

"This is something that God has placed on my heart," Hickerson said. "If we just change one person's life or perspective, it's totally worth it to me. I'm very passionate. I love the Lord, and I love others."

The students said they hope to get involved in anti-abortion rallies in Little Rock and possibly take a trip to Washington D.C. for an anti-abortion rally in the future. They also said they hope to volunteer in the community and raise money for various "pro-life" foundations.

"We're open to have tough conversations with others," Endsley said. "We want to raise awareness and spread God's love. We want everyone to feel welcomed, even if they have different opinions — that's OK. We want to learn and have educating conversations."

HU Students for Life will have their first meeting Sept. 23 at 5 p.m. in Mabee 111. Anyone is welcome. More information and updates can be found on their Instagram page [@hu.studentsforlife](https://www.instagram.com/hu.studentsforlife).

QUARANTINE CLOSE UP

written by Guest September 18, 2020



It was a Monday morning. I was in unusually high spirits as I sat on my couch and sipped my coffee. A new week: a chance to start over and walk new paths. All of this came crashing down when a voice in my dining room gasped: “She tested positive.” Little did I know that these three words would dictate my upcoming week and eventually transport me seven hours away to my home in Chattanooga, Tennessee.

I quickly discovered that one of my housemates had unknowingly been in contact with someone who had tested positive for COVID-19 that morning. Terror and anxiety soon became a member of our household — what do we do next? In a situation like this, every decision is time sensitive as it influences your health as well as the well-being of those you come in contact with. My housemates and I thought we would all have to quarantine for two weeks. However, after discussing our situation with Dean Hester, she informed us that only the person who had been in

direct contact was required to quarantine. Our next step was to have the housemate who came in direct contact with the COVID-19-positive individual get tested. She drove to Conway that day to get a rapid test; she tested negative. Despite her negative results, she still had to self-isolate for 14 days because she was a direct contact. In addition, the rest of us were required to self-monitor our symptoms as well as keep track of how our housemate was feeling.

Every day held new challenges and questions that no one seemed to have a definite answer to; it felt like we were all spinning in circles that were fueled by fear. The deans at Harding University, specifically Dean Hester, communicated with us and gave us guidance as to what we should do next. Her communication was especially helpful when my housemate got tested again later that week and had a positive result.

I received news of her test results while I was in class; my stomach dropped. I instantly felt that everyone was staring at me and scooting away from me. Somehow, I was convinced that everyone knew my housemate tested positive and that I was now classified as a “direct contact.”

We informed Dean Hester of the change in our situation and she immediately contacted all of us through her personal phone. Dean Hester even called one of my housemates and told her: “You all have options.” My housemates and I were under the impression that we would have to quarantine in our house for the next 14 days. It was not an ideal situation, but at least we were all going through the difficult situation together. Dean Hester then informed us that while we could stay in our off-campus residence and quarantine together, this was the worst option. She then explained that if one of the four of us began to show symptoms during our quarantine, we would have to be tested and start our quarantine over. If we quarantined together in our house, we were looking at the possibility of eight weeks of quarantine — this was not an option.

Our next option was to each stay in a hotel room at the Heritage, the University’s on-campus hotel. If we decided to proceed with this choice, we would be required to purchase a meal plan through Harding’s dining service, Chartwells. We would not be permitted to leave the room until Sept. 21. We chose not to stay because we wanted to leave that option open for on-campus students who needed to quarantine.

The final option we had was to each travel to our respective hometowns where we would self-isolate in our houses until Sept. 21. The person that lived closest to the University lived five hours away, while someone else lived nine hours away. We were not prepared to travel such a long distance at such short notice, but we all felt this was our best option. By going home, we would not be living under the same roof as someone who tested positive for the coronavirus, and we would not be affecting one another’s health. Since we had not been in contact with our housemate since she had tested negative, we were not putting our families at risk of contracting the virus. This decision was also advised by a physician we were in contact with about our situation. We hoped that in choosing this, we would halt the spread of the coronavirus.

This experience opened my eyes to the immensely complicated nature of contracting the coronavirus or being in contact with someone who tests positive for it. Not only are people afraid of getting the coronavirus for health reasons, but it seems that people are nervous to get it because of how it will affect them socially. No one wants to be the person that tests positive for the coronavirus; no one wants to enter into the realm of an “untouchable.” Even though these situations are not personal, it is difficult to not feel like everyone is suddenly suspicious of you. We must not allow this fear to translate into a lack of responsibility; it is important to be aware of who you come in contact with and to get tested if necessary. If we are all willing to make the hard but necessary choices, such as wearing a mask, getting tested and isolating ourselves, the spread of the coronavirus will be slowed. It is our responsibility to show care and respect for our fellow man by making these difficult choices; we all serve a larger purpose, and this is one way we can acknowledge that our actions affect more than just ourselves.

REMOTE STUDENTS ADJUST TO A FULL SEMESTER ONLINE

written by Gabrielhuff September 18, 2020



Dr. Tim Westbrook looks at the screen displaying remote students attending his class, Sept. 16. (Photo by Audre Jackson)

Harding University students endured separation for five months due to COVID-19, cutting the on-campus spring semester short in March. Students reunited for the fall semester; however, not everyone was able to join the reunion, as some students continued to study remotely.

Junior Jeriah Brumfield chose to attend Harding from home. She said she wants to limit her exposure to people due to the coronavirus and ensure that she could finish the semester without interruptions. During her free time, Brumfield said that she works, enjoys nature and spends time with her family at the lake. When it comes to school, Brumfield said she was having an easy time adjusting due to already having to study remotely last semester.

"I have six classes," Brumfield said. "The professors are actually doing a really great job transitioning with [remote students] because this is something new for them, too. I feel like it's both our new normal for right now and kind of an exciting journey to go on to see how adaptable we all can be."

However, not every remote student has experienced a smooth transition into the fall semester. Senior Daniela Cuellar has struggled with adjusting due to Harding's unstable internet, which began the first week of classes and has yet to subside.

"I and other remote students have just been stuck because we haven't been able to hear any lectures," Cuellar said. "We haven't even been able to see recordings of anything, so we basically missed a whole bunch of classes and we have no idea what happened, and nobody can really tell us because [the class] wasn't recorded. The most any professor can do is just say, 'Hey this is what we talked about,' but it never comes close to a real lecture."

Classes are not the only activities Cuellar has to juggle in her life. Along with taking 17 hours this semester, she also undertook an online internship in Searcy and committed to tutoring virtually three to four times a day. Any free time she has left in her week is spent catching up on sleep, spending time with family and friends and watching Netflix.

"It's been a really hard adjustment," Cuellar said.

Despite all the nuances, students have seen some benefits of studying remotely. Senior John Lim, who chose to virtually attend Harding from his home in Singapore, said that a significant amount of flexibility came along with online learning.

"I am taking several classes that there's a lot of deep thinking involved," Lim said. "If I completely phase out, I can pause the video, leave and go do something else, then come back refreshed. There is that flexibility that I really appreciate, and of course, being around family has been a big part of that."

RUN, WOMEN, RUN!

written by Rachelbible September 18, 2020



A student jogs along East Park Avenue on the Harding University campus, Sept. 15. (Photo by Caroline Palmer)

Running is not for everyone, and sometimes it feels like running cannot be for women — especially if a woman is wanting to run by herself. While for most it may be a no brainer to never run alone, there are a lot of women who prefer to only run alone, narrowing down their options for when and where to go.

“I try to go during a time when there is plenty of light,” junior Nizhoni Thompson said. “I also try to stay on a trail or path where I know that there will be other runners, bikers or several people around.”

Thompson is on the women’s cross country team at Harding and said the coaches are very diligent about warning them not to run alone.

After the abduction and murder of Sydney Claire Sutherland in Newport, Arkansas, on Aug. 19, many women in the area are reconsidering their running habits. Junior Layne Pace, founder of Start-Her Running Company, has been using her platform to teach women how to run safely and effectively.

“Always tell someone where you’re going before you run,” Pace said. “Always have an escape plan or people in the area that could come and help you.”

Pace said it is always important to be aware of who is around you and that awareness is vital to staying safe.

“Constantly watching those around you, like if you are running on the street, you should be aware of what cars are around you,” Pace said.

One of the on-campus resources for women is the women’s self defense class on campus. The course is offered in the spring and fall semester to help women learn moves and strategies to protect themselves. Junior Natalie Bland took the class before spending a semester in Florence and Greece.

“I really felt empowered by the class, and even a year after taking it, I know that I could use some of the moves we learned if I needed to,” Bland said.

In addition to the self defense class, Harding provides blue phones on campus for anyone to use in case of an emergency. There are also many apps that runners can download to share their location while on runs. For iPhone users, Find My Friends is built into the phone, and Android provides similar features on their devices. In case of emergency, Public Safety can be contacted at 501-279-5000, and, in the case of a network outage, at 501-322-1757.